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Interruptions

A learned and original theologian once pointed out to me that of our Lord's discourses at least one was lost for us by the foolish interruption of His hearers. In a boat upon the Galilean Lake He took advantage of this seclusion from the multitude, and began thus to instruct His disciples: "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod." But the word "leaven" put them in mind of an omission, and they began to say to one another, "We have no bread!" And Jesus, seeing their childishness, went back to an earlier lesson which they should have known by heart, warning them once more against preoccupation with bodily needs. The new discourse was broken off for ever at its first sentence.

But interruptions are not always to be resented. If at times they thwart and banish inspiration, at others they induce or invigorate it, being in fact incursions of the normal world into what is unusual, factitious perhaps, and precarious. They bring shock and enlightenment, now evil or distressing, now encouraging and glorious; but always they remind us suddenly of the world that forms an immense background to all human devices and attempts at systematic effort. So it is that interruption is a favorite expedient of all playwrights. The most thrilling moment in dramatic literature arrives when Macbeth and his wife, muttering terribly together at dead of night, are startled by a sudden knocking at the gate. Who is this unknown new-comer? One who shall instantly denounce them, or perchance some Shape of Doom itself? Shakespeare, in this perfect example of dramatic interruption, has drawn special attention to the power of this device by prolonging the tension almost unbearably in the famous monologue of the Porter who comes grumbly to answer the midnight summons.

Interruptions and Dramatic Movement

But not only in great tragedies do we observe the value of interruption: it is a chief means of dramatic movement in those coarser types, melodrama and farce. For the stage does but hold the mirror up to life, as the Master said, and life at its most significant is full of interruptions—"dramatic," as we call them. So when the Greek commanders held their memorable council of war on the Spartan flag-ship before Salamis, Themistocles urging that they should stay and fight it out with the Persian, while others

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counselled yet another stage of retreat, a bitter Corinthian interrupted Themistocles with the menace of a blow, to which he answered with the famous plea: "Strike me, but listen!" An invading fleet came to interrupt Drake's game of bowls, but he would hear none of it till his match was done, thus with a pretense of braggadocio heartening all beholders in the hour of stress by a timely coolness.

It was news of another invasion that inspired the most famous passage of ancient eloquence. Demosthenes tells how news came suddenly to the Athenian magistrates, while at table, that Philip of Macedon had forced the pass of Elateia and might at any instant lead his terrible army sweeping across the plain up to the city gates. "Evening fell. There came one with tidings for the Presiding Committee: 'Elateia has fallen.' Straightway they rose up from dinner. . ." The arrival of that unnamed messenger served but to postpone the utter overthrow of Athens. Yet another invasion was avenged by an interruption still more dramatic. The Gauls had captured Rome, and were at length induced to withdraw only by payment of many pounds' weight of gold. Scales were set up in the Forum and the worn survivors of the defense were pouring in their treasure when the Gaulish chief Brennus threw his sword into the scale. At that moment of humiliation there marched unheralded into the Forum Camillus, the

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second Founder of the City. He had rallied the scattered soldiers of the Republic and now returned in the nick of time to expel the arrogant invaders.

Coleridge relates how during a sleep of three hours he dreamed a marvellous poem, which on awaking, he remembered with strange precision. Eagerly he began to set it down; but, when some fifty lines had been transcribed, "a person arrived on business from Porlock, and after the hour's interruption was past the poet found that all save a spectral memory had departed, leaving *Kubla Khan* for ever a fragment." On the other hand, an interruption is devised by Plato as the occasion for one of his greatest passages. Socrates and others are gathered at the celebrated *Symposium* in Agathon's house, when a tumult is heard, the door bursts open, and there enters a rout of revellers headed by the glorious but ill-fated Alcibiades, who in his festal excitement breaks into that wonderful encomium upon the virtues and genius of Socrates. . . . "And as for me, gentlemen, it is only the fear that you will think me utterly intoxicated that prevents me from taking an oath to attest the power that this man's words have had upon me, yes, and still have. When I hear him, my heart throbs and the tears flow. . . . When I listened to Pericles and other good orators, I thought they spoke well..yet nothing of this kind happened to me; my heart was not filled with distress and revolt against my own degraded state. But Socrates has often used me, so that life has seemed not worth living unless I changed my ways."

Interruptions and Life

Such consummate interruptions contrived by the artist, whether Plato or Shakespeare, for his own purposes, do but remind us of the life from which art springs. No literary device can surpass that moment when on the Bristol hustings Burke's opponent fell dead in the presence of the assembled electors, and the greatest of all orators voiced his majestic comment: "What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!"

Mournful fancy has often regarded Death as the universal interruption, not a quiet close setting the crown upon life's work, but a cruel snapping short of beauty or endeavor, so that a common fashion of stone memorial is the broken column, its graceful fluting split jaggedly across, the completed shaft and comely finial left to sad imagining. In this mood we assent to Victor Hugo's saying that we are all under sentence of death with an indefinite reprieve. But to acquiesce steadily in such a doctrine is to antedate our end, to feel too sorrowfully that in the midst of life we are in death. Assuredly the more systematic our way of living, the more carefully planned our endeavor, the more certainly must death arrive as a catastrophic interruption. Yet, though we cannot choose but plan, underneath all our de-

vices and ambitions there must ever be some simpler spirit that inspires rather than shapes our doings. If this spirit be wise and sound, death which makes ruin of ambition can never bring to the inner life anything more lamentable than a tranquil close, foreseen yet undreaded.

Gilbert Norwood

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Waves and Color in Catullus 65

Catullus' poem 65 accompanied a translation from Callimachus sent to Quintus Hortensius Ortalus. The poet in the former gives as the reason for his tardiness his inability to write from grief over the recent death of his brother (5-6): "namque mei nuper Lethaeo gurgite fratris / pallidulum manans adluit unda pedem." I should like to suggest that the "wave" image of the two lines, perhaps because it symbolized the *raison d'être* of his mourning, seems to have loomed large in Catullus' mind and governed to an extent his mode of expression in the twenty-four line poem. For in line 4, as if in anticipation of the figure of lines 5-6, he writes "tantis fluctuat ipsa <mens animi> malis." Later (18) he remarks that though still sorrowing he sends his translation "ne tua dicta vagis nequ quam credita ventis / effluxisse meo forte putes animo." Finally (24) the confusion of the girl with whose forgetfulness he compares his own he describes in the words "huic manat tristi conscius ore rubor."

The story of the girl (19-24) referred to above Catullus tells thus: her lover had secretly given her an apple, which she hid in her lap. Startled at the approach of her mother she leapt up, the apple falling out to convict her. Catullus ends, "atque illud prono praeceps agitur decursu, / huic manat tristi conscius ore rubor." I suggest that in these lines exists a twofold parallelism or comparison: one of motion—the apple rolled down while a blush ran (flowed) into the girl's cheeks; but also, more subtly lurking, one of color—the apple's crimson flash and the rosy color staining the girl's face. Only a poet of high order writes such lines as these.

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Leo Max Kaiser

One might suppose that before deserting the *exemplaria graeca* it would be wiser to wait until the world has another age that proves as clearly as did the great age of Greece that man may combine an exquisite measure with a perfect spontaneity, that he may be at once thoroughly disciplined and thoroughly inspired.—Irving Babbitt.

Suadere primum, dein corripere benevoli est.

—Publilius Syrus, *Sententiae* 645.

Ubi iudicat, qui accusat, vis, non lex valet.

—Publilius Syrus, *Sententiae* 729.

A Figure of the Tragic Dance

From earliest times, the dance played a vital part in the tragic performances of the Greeks. Even before tragedy had developed into a literary genre, the primitive rituals to Dionysus had presented a fusion of song, dance, and music in which each of the three elements was regarded as essential; and this condition prevailed throughout the great period of Greek tragedy. The early playwrights Thespis, Pratinas, and Phrynicus were actually called dancers (*Athenaeus* 1.22A). Aeschylus instructed his own choruses in dancing (*Athenaeus* 1.21E-F), and Sophocles, acting a minor part in his play *Nausicaa*, gained new fame for his graceful ball-playing or ball-dancing in it (*Athenaeus* 1.20F).

We are told by many writers that the characteristic dance of tragedy was called the *ἔμμελεια*¹—a word which denotes “in harmony with the song or melody.” It was a dignified, serious, idealized dance form, carefully adjusted to the mood of the lines of the play. Very important in it was *χειρονομία*, the code of symbolical gestures which enabled a dancer to tell a story with his hands and body. We are told, for instance, that Telestes, one of the dancers of Aeschylus, could portray the whole story of the *Septem Contra Thebas* by dancing and gesture, without a word (*Athenaeus* 1.21F). The chorus made use of *χειρονομία* extensively to accompany their own songs and the long speeches of actors;² and actors as well as chorus “danced gestures” to accompany their own words. Such *χειρονομία* was deemed as much a part of the dance as were movements of the feet. Undoubtedly the tragic chorus assisted immeasurably in the audience’s comprehension of the sometimes complex choral odes by their expressive “dancing with the hands.”

Evidence for Fixed Gestures

There is evidence that the steps, *σχήματα* or figures, and gestures of the *ἔμμελεια*, were carefully taught to the members of the chorus, and were seldom, if ever, left to chance or the inspiration of the moment. Even the movements of the chorus in the orchestra were plotted beforehand; and we have specific record of lines (*Hesychius*, s.v. *γραμμαῖ*) marked out on the floor of the orchestra to guide the members of the chorus in their evolutions. Under these circumstances it is not surprising to find that ancient writers mention the names of a large number of formal *σχήματα* which they recognize as characteristic of the tragic dance. Phrynicus is said to have boasted that he himself originated for the dances in his tragedies “as many *σχήματα* as there are waves in a stormy sea” (*Plutarch, Quaestiones Conviviales* 732); and all the other writers of tragedy, at least down to and including Aeschylus (*Athenaeus* 1.21E-F), contributed *σχήματα* of their own devising.

We have the names of several of the recognized *σχήματα* of the dance of tragedy, but only rarely are we informed of the nature of one of these figures—the reason being, obviously, that the Greeks were so familiar with *σχήματα* that writers felt it unnecessary to describe them. We are told specifically that one of the *σχήματα* was called *παραβῆναι τὰ τέτταρα*—“to walk past the four.” Latte³ interprets this as denoting a shifting of position, when the dancers are arranged in five rows of three each, so that those in the last row come forward and become the first row, passing four other rows in so doing. Another *σχῆμα* attested for tragedy is the *διπλῆ*, or “the double” (*Pollux* 4.105; *Hesychius*, s.v.). It was used also in comedy (*Aristophanes, Thesmophoriazusae* 981-984). It was probably a figure in which the dancers formed two lines and danced in opposition to one another.⁴ Other *σχήματα* were the “flat hand down”—*χειρ καταπεղνής* (*Pollux* 4.105; *Athenaeus* 14.630A)—which seems to have been an actual or threatened slap of the hand;⁵ the “hand bent back”—*συμὴ χειρ* (*Pollux* 4.105; *Athenaeus* 14.630A; *Hesychius*, s.v.)—not unlike the characteristic hand gesture of the Cambodian ritual dances;⁶ “taking hold of the wood”—*ξύλον παράληψις* (*Pollux* 4.105; *Athenaeus* 14.630A)—which seems to have been the taking up or using of a wooden club or staff, in mimetic enactment of beating or threatened violence;⁷ the “sword-thrust”—*ξιφισμός*—a mimetic gesture apparently used during the recounting of a tale of combat or slaying;⁸ the “basket”—*καλαθίσκος*, *καλαθισμός* (*Pollux* 4.105; *Athenaeus* 11.467F)—perhaps a mimetic gesture suggesting the balancing of a basket on the head, in a religious procession or ritual.

In addition to these and other *σχήματα* of which we have the actual names, there certainly were in the *ἔμμελεια* innumerable other figures which were well known to the members of the Greek audience, and the mimetic significance of which they would understand at once. Unfortunately, very many of these *σχήματα* are probably lost forever. Of the others, however, it is possible for us to gain some idea, by means of a close scrutiny of the text of the extant Greek tragedies, together with a cross-check of odd bits of information on the Greek dance in general which are to be found elsewhere in Greek literature, and in the writings of the ancient and mediaeval lexicographers. It is the purpose of this paper to point out one new hypothetical *σχῆμα* of the *ἔμμελεια*, which may be detected in this manner.

A Proposed “Rowing” Step

In several of the extant tragedies I believe that there is clear evidence for a dance *σχῆμα* of “rowing.” In his fourteenth book (629F), *Athenaeus* says: “To the flute they <the Greeks of an earlier age> danced the dance of the *κελενοτής* . . .” The

Greek *κελευστής* or boatswain was the officer whose duty it was to keep the rowers pulling together in rhythm. I have discussed the dance of the *κελευστής* elsewhere.⁹ For the moment we need only note that it probably contained a *σχῆμα* suggestive of rowing. As a matter of fact, the actual motion of rowing must in itself have seemed a sort of dance to the Greeks, because of its rhythmical nature, and because it was often actually done to music.

In choral passages of all three of the great tragic poets there is a great deal of mention of oars and rowing. We may instance but a few of many examples. In the *Supplices* of Aeschylus, lines 134-136, the chorus speaks of the oars that sped them over the sea to Argos. Sophocles, in the *Trachiniae*, 655-656, has the chorus mention the oars which are bringing Heracles back home. The most famous choral ode in the *Oedipus Coloneus* of Sophocles 656, has the chorus mention the oars which are oars of a ship are said to "bound" along through the sea, following the Nereids. Euripides, in the *Electra* (432-441), has a similar choral passage, in which the ships of the Achaeans, with their oar-strokes, are said to "dance" with the Nereids and dolphins; and in the *Helena* (1451-1456) he calls the oar of a ship the "choregus" of the dancing dolphins. Especially striking are lines 1123-1136 of the same poet's *Iphigenia Taurensis*, in which the chorus sings of the fifty-oared ship which will carry the heroine and her two companions back to Greece, and for which Pan himself, with his reed pipe, and Apollo, with his lyre, are to serve as *κελευσταί* to the rowers. Other choral references to oars and rowing in the plays of Euripides are in the *Hecuba* (444-461); the *Troades* 1083-1105; the *Iphigenia Aulidensis* (172-177, 764-767); the *Iphigenia Taurensis* (407-439); the *Helena* (1117, 1456-1464); and elsewhere. And in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (52) there appears also the interesting metaphor of the "oarage of wings," imitated by Vergil in *Aeneis* 1.301.

"Rowing" outside Choral Passages

Not only in choral passages are oars and rowing mentioned. Very often, particularly in the plays of Euripides, one of the characters speaks of them. Helen, in the play of the same name, mentions the oars of Greek ships (191-193, 229-235). Teiresias, in the *Phoenissae* (852-853), says he has just come from Athens by oar. Hermione, in the *Andromacha* compares herself to a stranded, oarless boat (854-855), and wishes she might escape over the sea, as does a ship with its oars (864-866).¹⁰ In the messenger's speech near the end of the *Iphigenia Taurensis* (1327-1419) there is frequent mention of oars and rowing—particularly in lines 1403-1405, where, says the messenger, the oarsmen burst into song, singing a paean, and, in response to Iphigenia's prayers, bend their arms to the oars at the signal, *ἐν κελεύσματος*. This last word inevitably recalls to

mind *κελευστής*, which, as we have seen, is used as the name of a dance.

In short, it is something of a commonplace in Greek tragedy for an actor or the chorus to sing of the plying of oars, as some person or group of persons is borne over the sea. And in appraising all these references we must, of course, bear in mind continually the fact that the speech of actors and the songs of the chorus were accompanied by expressive and mimetic gestures interpretative of the words being uttered, and that these were thought of as dancing.

In addition to the passages we have considered, there are others in which the reference to oars or rowing is metaphorical in significance, and is associated with the expression of grief. In Aeschylus' *Septem Contra Thebas*, for instance (854-860), the coryphaeus bids the chorus, in giving vent to its sorrow, to imitate in gesture the rowing of the ship of the dead. This, incidentally, is the most specific reference which we have to a rowing *σχῆμα* in tragedy. In the *Alcestis* of Euripides (439-444, 459), the chorus, lamenting the dead queen, speak at some length of Charon's boat and its oar. In the *Persae* of Aeschylus (1046), Xerxes, leading the sorrowful chant of the chorus, says, "Row, row, and moan for my sake." The chorus apparently do so, for their next line is a wail of lamentation. In the *Choephoroe* (425-428) the chorus seem to speak of similar "rowing" motions about the head to accompany their wailing. There is probably a connection here with the common ancient practice of striking the head as an outward manifestation of grief.

If our hypothesis is correct, and if we have added one more—mimetic "rowing"—to the list of the *σχῆματα* of the tragic dance, it may not seem a matter of vital importance. But only by painstaking effort, and by the restoration of a figure at a time, can we hope to attain to a clearer understanding of the nature of the *έμμελεια*; and without that our concept of the Greek drama will always remain incomplete.

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NOTES

- Suidas, s.v.; Hesychius, s.v.; Plato, *Leges* 7.816A-B; Lucian, *De Saltatione* 26; Athenaeus 1.20E; Pollux 4.53, 99; Scholium ad Aristophanis *Nubes* 540. 2 Cf. Athenaeus 14.628E-F; Scholium ad Aristophanis *Ranas* 924: ad *Nubes* 1352. 3 Kurt Latte, "De Saltationibus Graecorum Capita Quinque," *Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten* 13 (1913), p. 26. 4 Lillian B. Lawler, "Diplē, Dipodia, Dipodomis," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 76 (1945), pp. 59-73. 5 Id., "Flat Hand in the Greek Dance," *The Classical Outlook* 19 (1942), pp. 58-60. 6 Id., "A Snub-Nosed Hand in the Greek Dance," *The Classical Outlook* 20 (1943), pp. 70-72. 7 Id., "Beating Motifs in the Greek Dance," *The Classical Outlook* 21 (1944), pp. 59-61. 8 Pollux 4.99; *Etymologicum Magnum* 611.10; Athenaeus 14.629F; Suidas, s.vv. ξιφισμός, ξιφίζειν; Hesychius, s.vv. ξιφισμός, ἀποξιφίζειν, ξιφίζειν, ξιφισμάτων, σκιρίζειν; Photius, s.v. ξιφισμός. 9 Lillian B. Lawler, "The Dance of the Ancient Mariners," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 75 (1944), especially page 30. 10 Cf. Id., "Dream-Boats and the Classic Drama," *The Classical Outlook* 27 (1949), pp. 26-27.

Homer the Orator: Quintilian

So engrossed is the ordinary student of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in Homer as story-teller and as religious seer that the Blind Poet's insight into oratorical technique is overlooked. The perusal of Quintilian's *Institutiones Oratoriae* (10.1.46-51) will reveal astounding claims concerning the perfection of Homer's oratory.

Quintilian takes it for granted that Homer should be the fount of all eloquence: "Hic enim, quemadmodum ex Oceano dixit ipse omnium fluminum fontiumque cursus initium capere, omnibus eloquentiae partibus exemplum et ortum dedit (10.1.46)." He then proceeds to enumerate in detail wherein the perfection of Homer's oratory lies. The eulogy here pronounced is systematically arranged with reference to the essential elements of practical oratory. Let us examine in detail what Quintilian has to say.

Style of Rhetoric

If we follow the usual division of style into (1) the plain, simple, concise (*tenuis, subtile, pressus*), (2) the grand, lofty, passionate (*uber, grande, amplius, concitatum*), (3) the "middle," flowing, plastic, polished (*lene, nitidum, compositione, medium*), we see all three attributed to Homer by Quintilian: "Hunc nemo in magnis rebus sublimitate, in parvis proprietate superaverit. Idem laetus ac pressus, iucundus et gravis, tum copia tum brevitate mirabilis, nec poetica modo, sed oratoria virtute eminentissimus (10.1.46)."

Types of Speeches

Nor is it only in style that Quintilian maintains Homer is superb; he continues: "Nam ut de laudibus, exhortationibus, consolationibus taceam, nonne vel nonus liber, quo missa ad Achillen legatio continetur, vel in primo inter duces illa contentio vel dictae in secundo sententiae omnes litium ac consiliorum explicant artes? (10.1.47)" So clearly he says in effect, is Homer the master of "epideictic" or display oratory, that he will pass over this excellence in silence, and dwell upon judicial and deliberative oratory. Here too, however, he would say, we need only to think of the legation sent to Achilles in the Ninth Book of the *Iliad*, the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon in the First, or the Council of War in the Second, to realize that the poet was also complete master of judicial and deliberative oratory as well.

Mastery of Emotions

The same Homer who is the model for the three styles of rhetoric and the three types of speeches, is no less conspicuous for his mastery of the emotions: "Adfectos quidem vel illos mites vel hos concitatos nemo erit tam indoctus qui non in sua potestate hunc auctorem habuisse fateatur" (10.1.48). Nor does Quintilian use "illos . . . hos" without reason. The

words indicate a well-known antithesis as he has already shown us: ". . . adfictus igitur concitatos πάθος, mites atque compositos ηθος esse dixerunt (6.2.8)." The latter were *habitual* and characteristic conditions of individual minds. The former for the most part were *occasional* and more moving.

The Parts of a Speech

Following the usual division of a speech into *exordium, narratio, probatio, refutatio, and peroratio*, Quintilian attributes perfection to Homer here as well.

In regard to the *exordium* he says, "Age vero, non utriusque operis sui ingressu in paucissimis versibus legem prooemiorum non dico servavit sed constituit? Nam benevolum auditorem invocatione dearum quas praesidere vatibus creditum est, et intentum propositat rerum magnitudine, et docilem summa celeriter comprehensa facit (1.10.48)."

Concerning the *narratio*: "Narrare vero quis brevius quam qui mortem nuntiat Patrocli, quis significantius potest quam qui Curetum Aetolorumque proelium exponit? (1.10.50)"

As to the *probatio* and *refutatio*: "Iam similitudines, amplificationes, exempla, digressus, signa rerum et argumenta ceteraque genera probandi ac refutandi sunt ita multa ut etiam qui de artibus scripserunt plurima earum rerum testimonia ab hoc poeta petant (1.10.50)."

Finally, the *peroratio*: "Nam epilogus quidem quis unquam potest illis Priami rogantis Achillen preibus aequari? (1.10.50)"

Other Excellences

As though he had not already bestowed such praise upon the oratory of Homer as would flatter Demosthenes, Cicero, Burke, or Bossuet, Quintilian complements Homer on his well-chosen terms, well-put thoughts, lively figures, and clear arrangement throughout: "In verbis, sententiis, figuris, dispositione totius operis nonne humani ingenii modum excedit? (1.10.50)"

Quintilian concludes his appraisal by once more asserting Homer's absolute superiority, especially, he says over other epic poets: "Ut magni sit virtutes eius non aemulatione, quod fieri non potest, sed intellectu sequi. Verum hic omnes sine dubio et in omni genere eloquentiae procul a se reliquit, epicos tamen praecipue, videlicet quia clarissima in materia simili comparatio est (1.10.51)."

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Books are for nothing but to inspire.—Emerson.

It is just one of the great virtues of a classical education that it makes it hard for us to read any good book carelessly.—John Burnet.

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EDITORIAL

To Those Who Have Toiled Before

The current volume twenty-seven of THE CLASSICAL BULLETIN brings a change in publication and editorial responsibility, and likewise a realization of profound indebtedness to those who have so ably and self-sacrificingly brought the journal through more than a quarter-century into this year of 1950. Beginning with the present number, THE CLASSICAL BULLETIN will be the charge of the department of classical languages at the central university campus. During the current year of transition, as the editorial masthead indicates, its fortunes will be looked to by an acting editorial committee. In 1951-1952, it is expected, a permanent editor will be appointed, who will actively handle THE CLASSICAL BULLETIN, under an editorial committee composed of the members of the department of classical languages.

Thus for 1950-1951 no notable changes of policy or format are envisioned. THE CLASSICAL BULLETIN will continue to be published, as a twelve-page journal, six times in the academic year, from November through April. The price will remain the same—two dollars per year, or one dollar and sixty cents for those who send their subscriptions through The Classical Association of the Middle West and South, according to reciprocal arrangements concluded some time ago with that regional organization. As heretofore, contributions of articles and notes, conforming in content and length with the established practices of THE CLASSICAL BULLETIN, will be most welcome.

But this time of transfer brings with it reflections and memories. The first number of THE CLASSICAL BULLETIN appeared in February of 1925; the second, in May of 1925. There was a total of six pages in the two numbers, and the volume was marked "For Private Circulation—Missouri Province." The Mis-

souri Province continued to exercise financial responsibility for THE CLASSICAL BULLETIN, which was known as "the official organ of the 'Classical Association of the Missouri Province,'" an organization having as its aim "the improvement of the teaching of the classics throughout the Province." At that time, the present Chicago Province was still a part of the Missouri Province, so that the colleges and universities included, of now existing institutions, the Creighton University in Omaha, the University of Detroit, John Carroll University in Cleveland, Loyola University in Chicago, Marquette University in Milwaukee, Regis College in Denver, Rockhurst College in Kansas City (Missouri), Saint Louis University, and The Xavier University in Cincinnati.

The second volume, 1925-1926, showed at once a notable growth, running through nine numbers, October through June, for a total of one hundred and twenty pages, plus an index, and also a ten-page supplement in honor of the bicentenary of the canonization of the Jesuit Saint Aloysius, with a three-act Latin play called "Aloisius Pacifier," by The Reverend K. Harzheim, S.J.

During most of the many years of THE CLASSICAL BULLETIN, it was the late Reverend James A. Kleist, S.J., who served as its zealous and able editor. For 1926-27, however, The Reverend Francis A. Preuss, S.J., then and now at the College of Liberal Arts at Florissant, Missouri, guided the course of the publication; for, as he editorially remarked, "Father Kleist is spending a sabbatical year in Germany, engaged in philological research." For volume four, 1927-1928, Father Kleist, then at John Carroll University in Cleveland, was again at his editorial duties. In 1928, he was transferred to the department of classical languages at Saint Louis University, where he remained until his death on April 28, 1949. To Father Kleist, THE CLASSICAL BULLETIN was one of the major joys and cares of his scholarly life; his unremitting toils, and his wide correspondence with scores of fellow scholars, brought THE CLASSICAL BULLETIN increased interest and increased prestige.

Towards the close of his life, he felt compelled to relinquish his editorial duties. Those who succeeded him—for brief terms, as the vicissitudes of the times would have it—were The Reverend Richard E. Arnold, S.J., now at Marquette University; The Reverend Charles T. Hunter, S.J., now at Florissant; and The Reverend Francis A. Preuss, S.J., who, though not officially editor except for a few years, has given unstintingly of his time and ability throughout the history of the publication.

To these, and many others associated with them, THE CLASSICAL BULLETIN in its new circumstances, voices its heartiest thanks and appreciation, with the humble hope that this year may not prove altogether unworthy of their high achievements.

Translation: Shakespeare, Sonnet 29

When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes
 I all alone beweep my outcast state,
 And trouble deaf Heaven with my bootless cries,
 And look upon myself and curse my fate,
 Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
 Featur'd like him, like him with friends possess'd,
 Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,
 With what I most enjoy contented least;
 Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
 Haply I think on thee,—and then my state
 (Like to the lark at break of day arising
 From sullen earth) sings hymns at heaven's gate;
 For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings,
 That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

Contemptum et miserum cum me Fortuna reliquit,
 Exsul et infelix tristia fata fleo.
 Assiduos gemitus caelum depellit inanes:
 Taedia mi vitae pectore maesta sedent.
 Indigus invideo gazae vultusque beato,
 Quaeque sodalitii dulcia membra tenet,
 Ingenium huius avens divinum atque illius artem,
 Gaudium et aspernans quod mihi suave fuit.
 Sic mihi fata volutanti vitamque peroso
 Forte subit carum nomen amorque tuus.
 Carmina deinde cano pennatus ad aethera laeta,
 Qualia luce nova praepes et alta solet.
 Namque tuum recolens dives sum factus amorem,
 Incipio et felix temnere regis opes.

John Hammond Taylor, S.J.

Saint Francis Xavier Novitiate,
 Sheridan, Oregon

Aesop and Phaedrus

The fable is as old as the hills. Its provenance, however, is not so well established. Plant and animal tales were in full swing in Babylonian literature as far back as 3000 B.C. Many critics think that our modern stream of fables took its rise in India. It is quite conceivable that popular tales about animals sprang up independently in various parts of the world, whether at the same time or in different periods. Wherever the conditions of life are primitive, wherever man lives in close contact with beast or plant, there folklore will flourish, and the fable is, essentially, a manifestation of the spirit that produces folklore. If we can trust the Greeks themselves, they seemed to think that the fable came from Phrygia, or Lydia, or Caria, or Cilicia, or Cyprus, or even from Egypt and Africa.¹

The fable appears both in prose and in verse. Entertainment and advice are its chief objects. In countries where a despotic government made outspoken criticism of existing conditions impossible or at least risky, popular wit would readily seize upon the beast fable as a more covert means of voicing dissatisfaction. As a rule serious and satirical in

tone, the fable deals with the injustices of life, exposes social and political evils, and in general sums up that *Lebensweisheit* or practical wisdom which tides humble folk over their petty difficulties, or at least gives them a chance for airing their grievances. What an oppressed heart needs first of all is ventilation. This effect is not diminished by the fact that the fable wraps its complaint in a veil of secrecy.²

In Greek literature the fable made its first appearance³ in Hesiod's *Opera et Dies* (202-211). Hesiod did not mince matters in telling his rapacious brother what he thought of him. But the Fable of the Hawk and the Nightingale, which was intended to show how utterly helpless the little man is when in the clutches of one in power, was directed to another address. It is introduced by the significant line which gives away the secret: "And now I will tell a fable for the benefit of princes—though they themselves understand."

Greek poets associated with the fable⁴ were, among others, Archilochus and Semonides. In A.D. 180 Babrius rose to fame through his fables. But the most illustrious name in fable literature is Aesop, a Thracian slave of, probably, Phrygian descent (about 550 B.C.), who by his collection of beast tales became the Father of the Fable (sometimes called the "Homer of Fables"). He bears this name in the sense that all later writers of fables felt somehow indebted to the *μῦθος Αἰσώπειος*. A more practical consideration led Phaedrus to call his fables *fabulae Aesopiae*, to win prestige ("auctoritatis gratia") for his own work or, perhaps, to increase the sale of his books ("Pretium maius inveniunt"):

Aesopi nomen sicubi interposuero,
 Cui reddidi iam pridem quicquid debui,
 Auctoritatis esse scite gratia:
 Ut quidam artifices nostro faciunt saeculo,
 Qui pretium operibus maius inveniunt, novo
 Si marmori adscriperunt Praxitelem suo,
 Trito Myronem argento, tabulae Zeuxidem.
 Adeo fucatae plus vetustati favet
 Invidia mordax quam bonis praesentibus (5. Praefatio 1-9).

This rather unblushing admission of the pious fraud not only satirizes the craze for antiques, well known among the Romans of the time, but also indicates the value Phaedrus set upon his own fables ("bonis praesentibus"), as compared with those of Aesop. Only the illiterate could be fooled by the interposition of Aesop's name!

To return to the Greeks: it is only in the light of the importance which the Greek attributed to the beast fable in practical life that one can account for the fact that even the serious Aristotle, in spite of his insistence upon the enthymeme as the very core of argumentative exposition, sets forth the merits of the fable as a means of persuasion in popular assemblies: "There are two kinds of argument from example: the one, a parallel from historical facts, the other, an invented parallel, the fable." He goes on to tell the fable used by Stesichorus to prevent the assigning of a bodyguard for a certain Phalaris: it

would inevitably lead to the establishment of a tyranny. A fable was used by Aesop, he says, in defending one on trial for his life.

Among the Romans, too, the fable found an early home,⁵ whether it was borrowed from the East or was native to the soil. As far back as 503 B.C., Menenius Agrippa pleaded with the plebeians who had seceded from Rome and induced them to return. By the Fable of the Belly and the Members he showed that they were only hurting themselves if they persisted in their secession. The story is told by Livy (2.32). Ennius and Lucilius, too, knew the value of the fable. Horace tells a charming tale about the Town Mouse and the Country Mouse is one of his *Saturae* (2.6.77-118). But the popularity of the fable advanced by leaps and bounds when Phaedrus, a slave in the household of Augustus, made a collection of fables and enriched it with his own. It is this Aesop-Phaedrus tradition that has flooded the whole Western world with this familiar form of giving advice and entertainment. In France, the fable came into prominence through LaFontaine, in Germany through Gellert and Lessing.

As the fable had come from the East, so back to the East it went and produced (after A.D. 500) a second bloom in India, Persia, and Arabia.⁶ Might not the stream be conducted back once more into the twentieth century and, through Phaedrus, furnish the milk for our Latin babies until they are ready for the stronger food of Caesar?

*James Aloysius Kleist, S.J.

Saint Louis University

NOTES

* "Aesop and Phaedrus" is one of various unpublished papers by the late Reverend James Aloysius Kleist, S.J., who served for twenty years as editor of *The Classical Bulletin*. It is hoped to present from time to time in these pages more of Father Kleist's as yet unpublished writings.

1 A thorough-going account of the fable, under all its aspects, is given in Wilhelm Schmidt and Otto Stählin, *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur* (München, C. H. Beck, erster Teil, erster Band, pp. 667-683; see especially p. 671, with notes. 2 Some fables are, of course, light and merely amusing. 3 The only passage in Homer showing a trace of the fable is *Iliad* 24.527-528. 4 Greek words for "fable" are: *λόγος* (prose); *ἔπος, ἀλος* (didactic tale); *μιθῶσ* (fiction). For *ἀνάλογος*, "apologue," see Cicero, *De Oratore* 2.264; Quintilian 6.3.34; Gellius 2.29.20. 5 See J. Wight Duff, *A Literary History of Rome in the Silver Age* (London, T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd., 1927), pp. 134-154, "Phaedrus and Fable." Questions regarding the provenance of the fable are lengthily discussed by Schmid-Stählin, *loc. cit.* (note 1). 6 A standard edition of Phaedrus is that of Louis Havet, *Phaedri Augusti Liberti Fabulae Aesopiae* (Paris, Hachette, 1895). Havet has also a school edition: *Phèdre, Fables Esopiques* (Paris, Hachette, 1896; variously reedited thereafter). An excellent German edition is that of J. Siebelis, *Phaedri Fabulae* (Leipzig, Teubner, ed. 6, von F. Polle, 1889). An edition of the Latin text with a French translation is the following: Alice Brenot, *Phèdre, Fables* (Paris, Budé, 1924).

Plus ibi boni mores valent, quam alibi bonae leges.
Tacitus, *De Germania* 19.

A possible camper's motto from the first century of our era: Sic male relictus igne de magno cinis / Vires resumit.—Seneca, *Troades* 544-545.

A First International Classics Meeting

The *1er Congrès de la Fédération Internationale des Associations d'Études Classiques* was held in Paris from August 28 to September 2, under the patronage of UNESCO. It might somewhat cynically be classified as having been a gathering of the leading classical scholars of the world to discuss in French, English, German, Italian, and Spanish various problems connected with the study and teaching of Latin and Greek.

Despite this veritable Babylon of tongues, which to the American ear can be rather disconcerting but to which the European is more attuned, a Pentecostal spirit prevailed throughout the meetings—a genuine enthusiasm for the common heritage of a Graeco-Roman culture.

Various Projects Proposed

Various projects were proposed to the assembly for the advancement of classical studies. Among those which received final approval may be mentioned the following: the publication of a bibliographical manual giving a brief description and evaluation of Greek and Roman periodicals; the founding at Paris of a central library for all classical periodicals and microfilm copies of articles dealing with classical subjects in non-classical journals; a common file containing a list of the projects on which graduate students and research scholars are working throughout the world; and, finally, a new international edition of classical authors. Further details about these projects will be available in the proceedings of the congress which will be published about the first of next year.

Of some interest to parents and pupils who are compelled to make a choice of a curriculum should be a brief description of the general debate on the *ratio finalis* of classical studies and the best means to attain that end. *La culture classique dans l'Enseignement moderne* was the topic for discussion the morning of the last day of the convention. No attempt will be made here to give a verbatim report of the session, nor even to include the opinions of all the speakers. I hope only that in the brief summaries of the ideas advanced by the major contributors I have not strayed too far from their exact intent and meaning.

Proposed Points of Debate

The discussion was led by Professor Jean Bayet, delegate of the *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*. He proposed the following four points as questions of debate: 1) *Extension or Restriction*. Should a greater or lesser number of students undertake Greek and Roman studies? 2) *The Problem of Choice*. Where should the accent be placed in the teaching of Greek and Latin? on the language—the study of philology? on the civilization—the study of

history? on the moral content of the various authors—the study of ethics? 3) *The Problem of the Elite.* To what extent are classical studies useful and necessary for the formation of a group of intellectual leaders with greater insight and correspondingly greater obligations? 4) *The Pedagogical Problem.* At what age is it best to begin the study of the classics? What is the best program to be followed in a particular country?

The Problem of Extension

Professor Jules Marouzeau, delegate of the Société des Études Latines, and president of the Congress, was the first to comment on the topics proposed. He challenged the aptness of the division. He said he would combine the first two questions. His answer to the matter of extension of classical studies would then be "Yes and No." "Yes," for the greater diffusion of a general knowledge of classical culture; "No," for a greater number studying the languages. (This observation must be taken in the light of the French background where the teaching of Latin and Greek is still widespread in the secondary schools.)

Professor Vincenzo Ussani of Rome made the next major contribution to the discussion. He pleaded for the greatest possible extension of classical studies. The world today is seeking for some form of federation. For many centuries educated men have had a common basis for their culture. Not all can read Shakespeare or Goethe, but all can read Horace and Vergil. (I am afraid that most Americans would rate as rustics by this standard.) This common culture should be founded directly on a knowledge of the classical languages. Such a knowledge comes only with time. Even in Italy there are schools in which but two or three years of Latin are taught. That is not enough. Better restrict such teaching and give instead general courses that will give some notion of Greek and Roman achievements. For those who study Latin and Greek there must be exercises in composition. No one can teach English who cannot write an English letter; and no one can teach Latin who cannot write a Latin letter. Those who study Latin and Greek in the secondary schools should continue their studies in the universities. But the teaching must be fundamentally humanistic. Unfortunately in the universities too much attention is given to philology and too little to the humanities. Philology is a daughter of humanism—but too often a parricide.

Are Classical and Scientific Opposed?

Miss Clair Prettux, of Brussels, who was a member of the committee for the organization of the convention, took exception to an earlier opinion as to the opposition between a "classical" and a "mechanistic, or scientific" program of education. In reality the two are not so fundamentally opposed. The historical Greeks did not begin with grammar or philol-

ogy, but with physics,¹ mathematics and geometry. The scientific and artistic traditions are survivals of two different aspects of the same civilization in which every student should have an opportunity to share.

Professor Silvio Mercati of the University of Rome thought that even two years of Latin for a student is better than none. He put a new interpretation to the matter of "extension" in the study of the classics. Two or three times a year a class should be given an author that is fairly easy to read. Such a proceeding gives the pupils confidence and introduces them to new fields of learning. Teachers could at times imitate the Italian humanists of the fifteenth century who began with authors nearest to their own time and worked back to the ancients. In the teaching of Latin one should insist on a considerable amount of memorization: *tantum scimus quantum in memoria habemus.* Professor Mercati cited the example of a friend of his whose remedy for ennui was to recite an ode from Horace or lines from Vergil. (This is a good eighteenth century custom not now so honored in observance.) Those not following a classical course could be given passages in translation from ancient authors referring to their particular field of study—medicine, law, or mathematics.

Professor P. J. Enk, delegate from the University of Groningen, observed that his country was habitually conservative and that the study of the classics was still flourishing in the secondary schools of Holland. As for himself, he believed that the teaching of Greek along with Latin was essential for a truly classical education.

The Classics in America

Mr. Stephen Daitz of Harvard University mentioned the fact that the position of the classics in the United States is considerably different from what it is in Europe. In Europe the study of Latin and Greek begins fairly early, while in the United States there are possibly not a dozen public high schools in which Greek is taught. On the other hand in the colleges, especially in the large private universities such as Chicago, Yale, Harvard, and Columbia, courses in classical civilization—some of them obligatory—have been introduced. This in turn has created a demand for courses in Greek in the universities. To many of the delegates at the Congress this was a piece of interesting information. It was followed by another of even greater import.

Professor Otto Regenbogen of Heidelberg, delegate from the *Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften* and member of the international commission for the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, had come, as he said, "to listen and not to speak." But in the brief space of a few minutes he gave one of the finest talks of the whole convention. "We are far, far, too far out of contact with reality," he began, "No word

has yet been said about the student's attitude towards these subjects—*wie steht es mit diesen Jungen?* . . . I can only speak for my own country, but never before have we had so many students of the classics as we have now. They come to us from secondary schools poorly instructed, but eager to learn and asking for our help. What must we do? First of all we must give them a knowledge of the language. Without that knowledge there is no true understanding. Secondly, we can show them how to carry into practice what they have read and learned. When the lessons of law and justice which they have read in Plato's *Gorgias*² are carried into the council chambers, a spark is struck and a fire flares forth. Thus it was 2,500 years ago, and so it is today. These students do not want translations. We must not let them slip from our hands without passing on to them this great tradition."

A Teacher's Responsibilities

Professor Regenbogen's theme was further developed by the last speaker who insisted upon the three-fold responsibility of the teacher—to the world in which he lives, to his profession, and to himself.

Except for new matters of fact there was probably nothing said at this meeting which had not been said a thousand times before. But novelty in argument is not necessarily a criterion of value. If any point raised is worth stressing, it is perhaps the line indicated by Mr. Daitz and Professor Regenbogen. The classics are still with us, not because they are an item of luxury, but because we cannot do without them. Greek and Roman studies flourish only where and when a special need is felt for them. No amount of artificial stimulation can make them popular.

In Europe, where there are numerous remains of Greek and Roman institutions and even buildings, this need will always be felt more keenly. But it would be foolish to say that this need has not been felt or will not be felt in the New World. As long as men continue to learn from the past, as long as they take aesthetic pleasure in the artistic creations of other men, as long as they are inspired by the ideals—even natural ideals—of noble minds, so long will there be an interest in the classics—which for us means largely the writings of the Greeks and Romans.

As Professor Regenbogen remarked, "A knowledge of Greece can come as a rain after a long drought." One might add that such was the experience of the Romans, the experience of the Schoolmen, the experience of the Humanists. Who would be so bold as to say that the sum of human experience has been achieved, or that a serious study of the classics cannot again be the leaven of a great and popular movement? But since there is no history of the future, the most that teachers now can

do is, to quote the German delegate again, "not to let our students slip through our hands without passing on to them this great tradition."

M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J.
Southwell House, London

NOTES

1 Or the first Greeks to appear in history were not grammarians or philologists, but physicists, mathematicians, and geometers. 2 Better, Plato's *De Re Publica*, though the speaker mentioned the *Gorgias*.

Book Reviews

Giovanni Sarro, *Grammatica Latina* (terza edizione riveduta e corretta), Roma, Angelo Signorelli, Editore, 1950, pp. 219, 500 Lire; *Sintassi Latina* (terza edizione riveduta e corretta), 1948, pp. 286, 480 Lire; *Esercizi Latini* (seconda edizione riveduta e corretta), 1948, pp. 475, 750 Lire; *Esercizi di Sintassi Latina* (terza edizione riveduta e corretta), 1950, pp. 304, 650 Lire.

When a friend of Descartes asked him how he could best provide for the philosophical education of his son the famous philosopher did not suggest that the boy should read his own works. He advised something more efficacious: "Send him to a college of the Jesuits." Today, if one were to ask where a boy could get a good foundation for a classical education the answer might possibly be the same: "Send him to a Jesuit school—in Italy." But since that is something quite beyond the means and the desires of many American parents, a second or third best might be to introduce the boy to a set of books which have enjoyed great success in Italy, largely because they are in a tradition of classical pedagogy which has been evolved through centuries of experience.

The author of these four volumes which at the current rate of exchange cost on the average less than a dollar apiece, is a Jesuit teacher at the *Istituto Parificato Pontano* at Naples. They have been very highly commended in Italian reviews, and the fact that three of them have gone through three editions in less than ten years speaks of their popularity with Latin teachers.

Grammatica Latina, *Sintassi Latina*, and the two books of exercises which accompany them were designed for use in the five years of school which correspond to the sixth to the tenth grades in the United States. They provide an excellent foundation for further studies in Latin classics. Their merits are many, but chiefly clarity, completeness, and intrinsic interest.

Grammar and syntax are explained logically with schematic outlines at the beginning of each new section. Precise definitions are given to each new grammatical term employed. Rules of syntax are exact and concise. Many useful tables are given—for example a very useful diagram of the Roman method of reckoning the days of the month.

The two exercise books follow closely the general

progress of the *Grammatica* and *Sintassi*. In the earlier exercises unfamiliar forms are supplied in translation and bracketed into the text. In the first volume short essays are included on Roman religion, feasts, games, magistracies, and the like. An appropriate vocabulary is given at the end of each essay and the suggestion made that the student write an original composition about the matters which he has just read. In the second volume all the sentences to be translated from Latin into Italian are taken from classical authors with citations as to where the original may be found. Such a plan provides for general interest and grammatical accuracy.

In a review in *Rinnovare la Scuola* (15 Marzo 1949: 2. 15, pp. 3-4) Professor Aurelio Giuseppe Amatucci has observed that "The author has demonstrated the fact that he fully realizes that such books should not only serve to illustrate the rules of grammar, but that they should also introduce the pupil to a knowledge and appreciation of the culture of a people."

Though highly interesting in themselves, these four books are by no means the be-all and end-all of the classical course in Italy. Beginning with the second year of Latin the students are introduced to selections from Phaedrus, Caesar, Ovid, Tibullus, Sallust, Cicero, and Vergil. Livy, Vergil's *Bucolics* and *Georgics*, Catullus, Horace, and Lucretius are left for the more advanced Latin program of the three-year *Liceo Classico*.

Father Sarro's four volumes should be of interest to students of education and in particular to classical teachers as they are a concrete illustration of what may be taught a boy, "if he be caught young enough."

M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J.

Southwell House, London

Allan Nevins and Others, *The Humanities for Our Time: University of Kansas Lectures in the Humanities*. Lawrence, University of Kansas Press, 1949, pp. 151 and Biographical Notes and Index. \$2.00.

The Prefatory Note to this new volume on humanistic studies informs us that the six papers which make up the contents were originally delivered as part of the 1947-1949 University of Kansas *Lectures in the Humanities*. In a brief Introduction, Professor L. R. Lind offers a summary-preview of the six papers and suggests that "international peace is not to be won by a neglect of our precious heritage of language, literature, history, and thought, in short the humanities which Europe gave us" (page 7). It is from this point of view that the book takes its title.

Professor W. R. Agard, the author of the first paper, has chosen for his subject "Three Themes in Classical Literature." These themes are notions which played an especially important part in Greek

thought and literature, and Professor Agard believes they can play a vital role in bringing contemporary mankind to a more rational mode of conduct. The first theme is mainly revealed in Homer and the tragedians, namely, the notion of avoiding *hybris*. The second is a favorite idea in both tragedians and philosophers. "In ordinary Greek parlance it is called *sophrosyne*, which is best translated as 'the intelligence which keeps us secure.'" The third theme is the Greek notion "that the greatest of all human values is freedom." The author's conclusion is tentative: "Even if the Greeks with the help of these notions could not save themselves, perhaps they can help in saving us...."

In "Literature as a Barometer of Modern European Society," Professor Hayward Keniston reviews some of the typical works of several eighteenth-century French writers (Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau) in order to show that "if you would understand a society you must look to its literary expression to discover the attitudes and movements and trends which determine its outward form." Though the essay carries conviction Mr. Keniston appears to invalidate his main thesis when in the final paragraph he introduces an unwanted subjective standard: "You need not accept my interpretations . . . That is the happy thing about literature and the arts. Each one of us must find in them his own meaning and his own values."

Professor Allan Nevins provides an interesting paper on "The Biographer and the Historian." After defining the three main types of biography, he goes on to discuss some of the pitfalls which lie in the path of the interpretative biographer. Ready examples are at hand to illustrate his subject.

In "Modern Fiction and the Threshold of Morality," Professor J. W. Beach suggests that a second hearing be given to a group of contemporary American novelists who have, in some quarters, been criticized on the score that their treatment of moral problems is not traditional, that their writings are seemingly without any moral tone at all, if not actually downright immoral. The contention of Professor Beach is that these men are *de facto* grappling with the problem of morality, but that they have decided to make a "new start, taking for granted nothing in conventional ethics that is grounded in religious and social absolutes." There is not space here to discuss the pro's and con's of this approach; the reviewer merely notes that it is difficult to see how the novelist, following this theory, can hope to produce a work of art, universal and ageless in its truth and beauty.

The contribution of Professor T. C. Bergin, "Dante and Romance Letters," considers three qualities which the great Italian poet has in common with many of the outstanding French and Spanish writers. "In the works of Dante we find as outstanding

characteristics a social purpose verging frequently on didacticism, a reverence for tradition, and a deep interest in words and the technique of poetic expression. These characteristics seem also readily preceptible in the outlines of Romance letters taken as a whole." The study is at once entertaining and thought-provoking.

The final paper, "The Classics and Survival Values," by Professor W. H. Alexander, is an interesting, well-written, and altogether engaging presentation of an oft-debated subject. After tracing the causes which brought about the gradual removal of the Classics as a basis of education in America, Mr. Alexander subjects to scrutiny a group of reasons which are at various times urged in defense of the study of the Classics. With hard-headed realism he shows that most of these reasons are only partially true—at times they are strict camouflage. He is especially critical of those who profess that the classics have a pragmatic, utilitarian value in our modern role of living, and he quotes with approval the statement of a British observer anent various classical meetings held at Oxford in 1948. "The appalling fallacy in which classical scholars, with their new-found sense of inferiority, are apt to indulge, is the contention that in some manner a knowledge of Greek and Latin is of practical utility in the modern world. Being terrified of being thought irrelevant, these noble men try, with pathetic obscurantism, to find a relevance in their studies which does not, and surely ought not, to exist." A few pages later we are given Mr. Alexander's view on the permanent value of classical studies. Considered by themselves, I do not think the classics can provide all the answers for the mind that Mr. Alexander seems to believe they can, but there is no doubt that his view is along the lines of genuine humanism. On the last page but one, I submit that Mr. Alexander passes too severe a stricture on the thirteenth-century French universities, by accusing them of a disregard of the classics in favor of a practical idolatry of logic. Such a view is *passé*. Doubtless the classics were in something of a slump during the period; but on the other hand, logic was not an end in itself—as the writer seems to intimate—but a mere tool, aiding the mind in its penetration of the most noble studies man is capable of—metaphysics and theology.

Francis Joseph Guentner, S.J.
Saint Stanislaus Seminary at Florissant,
Saint Louis University

While Virgil wins admirers, Horace wins friends.
—Duff.

To guide and encourage him, Plato had the genius of his race for form, its passion for perfection, and the curiosity that looks not so much for origins and causes as for value, appropriateness, workableness, orderly fitness.—C. F. Lavell.

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